

THE
True Notion
OF
GOVERNMENT:

Shewing,

- I. The Original of Government.
- II. The several Forms of Government.
- III. The Obligations betwixt Governours and Governed.

In Vindication of

KINGLY-PREROGATIVE.

By T. L. Gent.

LONDON:

Printed for *Edward Gellibrand*, at the Golden-Ball in *St. Paul's Church-yard*. 1681.

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THE TRUE NOTION OF Government, &c.

THE INTRODUCTION.

THe Discovery of our late Popish Plot hath been (though in its own particular signal and good, yet) not unlike some bad Physick, which raises more Humours than it can carry away; and tho perhaps working off that for which it was intended, yet leaves the rest in an unhappy fermentation. The Common People had their easie (and it may be now not altogether panick and unnecessary) Fears magnified to prodigious Jealousies; The Great ones seem'd to be at a stand, hardly

knowing

knowing which way to steer ; some indeed of the middle sort would pretend to be the onely Physicians for these Epidemic Maladies. But the Gentlemen were somewhat too eager in their Preparations, too hot and fiery ; and their Applications to the Feet, supposing the Distemper would fly up towards the Head, were hasty, desperate, and dangerous. This temper of Body could not but make the face of things look ill to all beholders. I (who am but a Young man) though not so very timorous of Affairs, yet could not but have, when every one else had, some more than ordinary apprehensions. The Noises were high, and the Blusterings great, which could not but at least seem to be the gathering of some greater Storm : In the apprehensions of which, I could not but judge it prudence to provide for shelter, supposing the black and pregnant Clouds should pour down their Tempests in showers as great as were threatned. To fly I thought mean, and indeed below a Gentleman : To stay at home Neuter, though sometimes prudent, yet would now be not onely pitiful, but difficult. My onely refuge then I supposed would be, by adhering stoutly to one side or other in a manly resolution. Which that I might do fixedly, and without wavering, I purposed with a sober and deliberate enquiry to look
into

into the great Controversie, and having found the justest side, there to fix or fall for ever. I went about it presently, & onely staid to follow the Philosopher's advice to his Novices, of laying aside all Prejudices. My circumstances are not such, as that they should give me many; wherefore with some ease, stripping my self of all the prejudices of Opinion, Perswasion, and the mighty Interest, I set about searching into the truth of things, with some hopes of finding the inestimable Jewel. My design is to know The true Notion of Government, (which hath of late made so great disturbances in the world); which that I may do, I consider these things: 1. The Original of Government. 2. The several Forms of Government. And 3. The Obligations betwixt Governours and Governed.

In manner of Civil Regiment, and Ordinance whereby he ordained Man to be in society and multiply, investing some with a natural Right and Dominion over others, as the Man over the Woman, and Parents over Children; from whence it is naturally and easily to apprehend a Continuation and with a Subordination. This Affection seems to me reasonable from the necessity of the thing, and the wisdom of God himself. To what purpose was Man created, and employed?

The Origin of Government.

First, for the Original of Government, I shall not trouble my self or others with a Philosophical enquiry into the state of Nature, whether it was Love, Convenience, or Fear, that first brought men into Society and Communion. We must raise our thoughts somewhat higher, to find out the great Truth, Which if we do, we shall find God himself the sole Creator. (as of all things else, so) both of Society and Government. : God made Man at first indeed but one; who when he was but one, yet received from God the best and only manner of Civil Regiment, in that Constitution and Ordinance whereby he ordained Man should propagate and multiply, investing some with a natural Right and Dominion over others; as the Man over the Woman, and Parents over Children; from whence it is ready and easie to approach to a Communion, and that with a Subordination. This Assertion seems to me reasonable from the necessity of the thing, and the wisdom of God himself. To what purpose was Man created, and endowed

dowed with Principles of Self-preservation if
 he must always live alone, whereby indeed he
 could not be naturally long preserved. But
 to what purpose hath he company, or is joy'd
 in Society with others, if without a Supreme
 Ruler, where every one must be then own
 Governor? For by those means his Self-pre-
 servation would be as equally destroyed, as if
 he had lived alone. The continual Jars and
 perpetual Animosities which must necessarily
 arise among men of different Minds, would
 quickly have brought the beautiful Frame of
 the new-created World into a Chaos as dismal
 as the dark Confusion it but now came out
 from. Wherefore the Divine Providence in-
 stilled into man, together with his Nature, an
 Inclination to Society, the only help proper
 for his designed end; and at the same time or-
 dained a Supremacy and Government, the
 only way proper for the preservation of Soci-
 ety. From whence it is plain to me, that God
 himself is the prime Author of Government,
 and sole Institutor of Governments (as shall far-
 ther appear in the Forms of Government). I
 cannot then but wonder how it comes in mens
 Minds to affirm that the grosser Body of the
 People did first of all agree upon and consti-

tute their Rulers; and from thence gather, that
 it is in the power of the People to make and
 unmake Princes as they please; and being it
 is somewhere said, *Ye are Gods*, they will be sure
 in this case to challenge the Pretogative, and
 dispose of Crowns and Scepters, set up, and
 pull down Kings, as if they were all Almighty-
 ties; which surely is the way, not onely to
 confound themselves and others, but to invert
 the whole Order of Nature; which though it
 be as strange as unnatural, yet is not more un-
 natural than is commonly maintain'd and pra-
 ctised. Wherefore I shall take care so to con-
 fute it, that my own Brest (I wish too that of
 others) may never harbour so foul a Monster.
 But that we may do these pretenders to so much
 Right, Justice, let us hear their Plea, and how
 their bold and daring Advocates can maintain
 their Cause. They say they are made by God
 and Nature free-born Denizons of the World,
 and can be subject to none without a voluntary
 resignation of their Freedom; but which yet
 cannot be so resign'd, but it may be revoked by
 them when they please. All which to me
 seems extreamly false, upon these accounts:
 That if there be any such natural Freedom,
 it must be either partial, and but given to some,
 or

or total and given to all Mankind : Now which of these soever they grant, it will be manifest there is no such freedom ; For if it be but partial, it altogether destroys their Cause , for whatsoever we have by Nature (especially in such a case as this) we have in common, and without exception of the thing it self, though perhaps with some difference in the Degrees and Measures ; so that to say there is such a partial Freedom , opens a way to prove that there is no such Freedom at all. But if it be granted to be Total, then they take away all manner of Subjection, even that of Children to Parents. But to make way for this great Prerogative, they will suppose that men once were all equally of years of Discretion, and so equally free ; which though it be most uncertain and unreasonable to suppose, yet shall for a while be supposed, and the consequence too, that men were once all equally free ; which will be as soon confuted as supposed : For supposing this Liberty to be so universal and natural, it must be as all other of Natures Institutions, immutable, and not to be changed by humane advices. I would fain know then upon what Authority they disposed of this Freedom to any other ? Who gave them leave to make

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such

such a breach of the Law of Nature as this must be, that is, to part with their Birth-right which God hath given them, together with their Lives? And surely it can be no less a crime to embezzle this than to dispose of ones Life, or ruine one part at ones own pleasure. But they have an Answer ready, that they do not absolutely part with this their so natural Right, but commit onely the Administration of such Power as is radically in them to others, it being neither convenient or possible but that it should be so. But yet they retain to themselves so much of this Right, as upon the Male-administration of the Power so delegated, they may revoke the Delegation, and take all the Power into their own hands again; but what is this, but most notoriously to traduce the Divine Providence? and to make the all-wise God act below the Principles of humane Wisdom? For would any man constitute such a Law which it is impossible to keep, but must necessarily be broke as soon as made? Shall then Wisdom it self commit such a gross error, as to make such a Sanction to such ends and purposes which it can never attain? Such an one is Supream Power naturally placed in the People, which, according to them, is so placed

placed by God ; but yet must immediately be delivered over by them to a more capable Subject. Wherefore to reconcile the egregious absurdity of altering what God hath ordained, and the necessity of having power otherwise posited than in the People, it must be granted that there never was any such power in the People at all ; but that they have it derived to them from another Power originally. And this may serve to confute the right of Revocation ; for if they have no power to transfer, they have none to take away : For who can justly take away what he hath no power to give ? Thus absurd are these mens Opinions ; Thus absurd must be their consequent Actions. But being they are the fond Sentiments of many, and darling crimes are hardly left, I shall farther represent the thing in all its colours, and shew it is not only absurd, but sacrilegious and ridiculous, impossible to be done, and most pernicious to the right governing of Kingdoms if attempted. That it is Sacrilegious, is evident from what hath been already said, That God himself is the sole Constitutor of Government and Governours. For can the People challenge that to be their right which is God's peculiar, without an act of the greatest impiety ? and what can it

be better than Sacrilege at the the creation of Princes, to mutilate that power which God hath given to supream Rulers? to pare and pill the Supremacy like unjust Guardians by Conditions of their own making, as if they were not Kings, or not to be so, till they had moulded them into Majesty, and breath'd into them the Spirit of Ruling; whereas all the people can then pretend to it under God to apply the person to the place of Governing. Surely then it cannot be but hugely ridiculous for them to pretend to any thing else; for it is a sober and sound Maxime, *That no one can create a greater than himself.* But they will reply, That though one cannot, yet many may, which I will grant where their Supposition is true; but that many in such cases as these have more power than one I wholly deny, it being ridiculous to suppose that those whose only place it is to serve, should more than command, it being a very true saying, *That it is more to make a King than to be one.* But they would take off all this by supposing a total failure in the Succession, which they enforce by an illustrating Similitude, That as the Lord of a Mannor re-assuming the Estate of a Tenant, whose legal Heirs are unknown to him, doth argue, that the Estate first of all proceeded from him,

him ; for the right of a People to constitute a Prince over them upon a total cessation of lawful pretenders, doth imply an original Right in the People of founding their Rulers ; but this surely infers no such thing : for it is not Choice but Power that makes Princes , which Power must be receiv'd from God the onely Author of it, who being (to answer their Similitude) the true and proper Lord of the Mannor, this Dominion is devolv'd on him, and therefore the Prophets, in case of failure in Succession, receiv'd from him altogether whom they should anoint, and the People at best are but God's Stewards in admitting a new Administrator of Kingly Power. But the ridiculousness of this Opinion will farther appear, if we consider the impossibility of its performance ; for how is it possible, for the infinite variety of Humours and Minds of the Multitude, to agree in an unanimous consent in choice of a Ruler ? Nor indeed did they ever agree in the election of any one Government or Governour. Now they are for a Parliament, and that must be a long one : Then for an Army, and that must be a great one : and then again for a Parliament, but that a Rump one. And then, forsooth, they must have some Godly man to reign over them, till
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at last, wearied with their excentrical and irregular choices, they begin to move in their own Sphear regularly, and turn to the good, the only way which they but now pull'd down, but God hath set up for ever. By this we may see (what Experience hath shewed to all) how pernicious these Opinions of the peoples having a right to Constitute their Ruler are to all Civil Governments. For where it is once infused into peoples minds (and how many are to infuse, how many ready to imbibe the poisonous infusion!) that Power is radically and revokably in them, there can never be any Peace or Unity, nothing but Tumult and Confusion. This Opinion is, like *Pandora's Box*, full of all manner of Evils, which being opened disperses its Contagions to all Conditions of men; The Church is afflicted, and her Priests slain; The Supream Power driven from his Throne, and the Bloud of his Nobles (and it may be his own) mixed with common Dust: The Laws are ashamed, the Judges decreeing Judgment according to Avarice and Fear: The whole Government perverted and confounded, and the Kingdom overthrown and ruin'd.

Of

Of the Forms of Civil Government.

THese great imaginations of the People, that Governours are so much at their dispose, are heightned to a belief that Government is so too, that with the one they can pull down the other, and Metamorphose States into what shapes they please. Monarchy they hate, 'tis as loathsome to them as Physick-potions to Children, being the strength of its Power can purge away the ill-affected humours, and keep low and in subjection the unruly Heats of distempered Bloud. 'Tis, they cry, too near Arbitrariness for Free-born Subjects, and can presently mount into Tyranny: Wherefore upon the least commotion and disturbance (which an hundred to one but themselves have made) they must presently to the Royal Palace, and pull down the supposed Tyrant, and it may be the Palace too for being the Habitation of their King, and they must immediately be platform'd into their beloved Commonwealth, where every one may have at least a Finger in the Government, where every one may be a Governour, and yet all Subjects.

These

These things they pretend to justify, by telling us, that though Government in general might be instituted by Divine Authority, yet the particular Sorts and Kinds were left by the All-wise Providence, to the Discretion of these so very wise men. But I would know of them, to what mens discretion this great Prerogative was given? If to all, I have shewed already the great Inconveniencies of such a Proposition; for all or the major part have not the Discretion or Wisdom for such a Choice, and few or many chusing doth manifest Injustice to the rest, All being free as well as Some. But then moreover it is contrary to God's Order or Method of Creation; which is, first to make Particulars, and from the Beings of Individuals to occasion the general nature of the thing to arise by a necessary consequence; as he first made *Adam*, and so mans Nature was made; he first made Sun and Moon; and upon that followed that he made great Lights; and so he proceeds in his Moral and Civil Institutions: For how could he, according to humane Apprehensions, make Government before he had constituted some Governour to administer it? he must first ordain some one Government in particular before

fore he could be said to be the Author of Government. But this will not stop the Mouths of the many-headed Beast, they will still be Barking and Shewing their Teeth, and great willingness to Bite; but if not, otherwise will rail the Monarch from his Throne, or Petition him, and humbly desire him to lay down his Scepter, to ease himself of the great trouble he takes in ruling them; whereas they had rather, and could do it themselves better than his most Serene Majesty: What would be the dismal consequences of such wicked Opinions as these few can prognosticate? but we may guess at the evils by the Intentions of this courteous and desiring Multitude, which is by former Example apparent, and by present Practise to be fear'd, no less than the breaking the Throne in pieces, and dividing to each a share, and then fancying themselves to be the Saints of the Earth, and so to have Authority from God to pearch upon the pieces of the divided Throne, and there set with Apostolick Jurisdiction judging the Tribes of our *Israel*. These things I do not love so much as to think of, but only to root in my mind the quite contrary opinions, and learn not only the unlawfulness of such intents, but the absurdity of them

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them; which I shall do by a short comparison of the fundamental Justice of the several sorts of Government which have been in the world. And first for the darling Whelp of the Beast Democracy; which, be it never so well lick'd, I fear, will prove but an ugly Monster. It is in the proper and genuine Notion of the thing a comprehension of the people generally without exception of any; but according to the assertions of it (who can alter any thing as they please) the meaning of it is, that many of the Inferiour and Ignobler sort of people are taken into the numerous Council, and Court of Judicature, administering the Publick. By this are people doubly choused; first, by being made believe that they have a right in the Government, and then by being forced to be content to use it only figuratively, and by a large Synecdock alone to have any share in what they so much pretend to; which in the end will prove to be none at all, and Democracy come at length to be nothing but a great contradiction. But they will say for themselves, it cannot be otherwise, but that some must be subject, that there must be some superiour Power to bring things into settlement and order: All which I do readily grant, and from thence gather, that Democra-

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cy is in its genuine sense a thing impossible, in their own ridiculous. The unfortunate and fatal pretences of the *Grecian* and *Roman* people to raise themselves to have a share in the Government are manifest testimonies of the Consequences of such attempts; who having no foundation of humane or divine right quickly fell Destruction and Ruine like the Dragon's Teeth which *Cadmus* sowed, they are from their very birth at war one with another, and can never agree till they have with their Blood manur'd that Ground; and are re-sown in those Furrows they but now came out from. Neither will Aristocracy find itself to be built upon any more Right, (or any other sort of Commonwealth) though the flourishing of some States thus governed may give a shew of more reason. For either these persons thus Ruling obtain their Authority by their powerful Usurpations over the People, who are by nature and ought to be continued still as free as themselves, and so their Authority is unjust; or else they receive it from the People delivering up their Right into their hands and constituting them their Rulers, but whilst the People have (as I have already shew'd) no such power to give, or if they had, could

not, or ought not, to part with it, this their Authority must also be unjust and unnatural. Neither can these Forms be to themselves safe; for if the People can make they can too unmake both Government and Governours, being they can recal that they do but lend upon Conditions, whensoever those Conditions fail; wherefore we must seek some better Government and settled upon more unalterable Foundations. Which we shall find Monarchical Government to be, if we rightly consider its true Constitutions. That God is the Author of some particular sort of Government must be granted by them who acknowledge him to be Author of Government at all; if of any, that he must be the Author of a Government lawfully unalterable, is plain from the end of all Government, Peace, and Unity: for if it was left to the People to alter Government as they pleased upon Inconveniencies that might happen, every Discontent would strait be busie in inventing new Models, or at least fancy one, so they might be but fingering the old, and State-making might turn to be a Trade among them, and alter as Fashions according to the fancy of the Inventor. (But Providence, if we would know it, hath better provided for our peace by constituting one par-

particular Form of Government above the rest. And if we can find any one particular Form of which he hath given any instances and intimations of his choice; and nothing can be brought to maintain any of the other Forms proceeding from him in a direct special manner, then may that Form of Government, and that onely challenge the preheminance. That Monarchy bears these Characters of its divine Institution may appear to every unprejudiced mind that considers, first, that the Original of Government (which I hope is by this time granted to be from God) was Monarchical: The Paternal Regiment being so, the Regal and Paternal differing only as *Magis* and *Minus*, which one would suppose to be proof enough that Government in its first Origine was Monarchical; but they say there is a greater difference than so betwixt them; for the Paternal Regiment was purely Natural; but the Regal of Civil Institution: that indeed constituted by God whilst the World was scarce of People, but this by consent of the People altogether, the beginning of it being to be ascribed to humane reason and necessity: For when Men and Impiety began to multiply, Ambition and Avarice, Injustice, and Robbery increased together with

Institution

the World, the soft and gentle bonds of Paternal persuasions were too weak to oblige Mankind from their inclinations to evil, altogether ineffectual to restrain the habit; so that to prevent the Inundation of a flowing confusion, necessity taught all to understand, that they must by a general Obedience submit themselves to Order and Dominion, supposing that a tolerable Bondage would be far better than the Licentious Disorder.

From this Necessity, say they, arose the beginning of Civil Government; from which it is plain that people chose then, and may do still, what Government they please. But surely though these Premises be seemingly true, their Conclusions are drawn up false: For though (to speak humanely) the beginning of Empire may be ascribed to Reason and Necessity; yet it was God that kindled this Light in the Minds of men, they saw they could not be preserved without a Ruler and Conductor: God himself having by his Eternal Providence ordained Kings, and that in the institution of Paternal Authority: For though the Supremacy of its Jurisdiction was diminished by the overgrown Disobedience of the encreasing World, yet was it
not

not altogether abrogated; for from it sprung
 Kingly Power, and as it were from the Ty-
 pical Idea of Family, and Economical Go-
 vernment proceeded the Form of Kingly Re-
 giment: The one, being the Father of his
 Family, the other, of his Country. One
 the indulgent Protector of his Children, the
 other of his Subjects; they both having Mo-
 narchical Jurisdiction over both. Moreover,
 the Law of Nature having thus written in
 Mens Mindes, and inclined them to this sort
 of Government onely does not a little prove
 the hand of God in its Institution, that being
 always accounted as an Institution of God and
 Nature, which all the World have without
 mutual Combination consented to practise,
 which that they did, is evident from all History.
 And it is no small argument for Monarchy,
 that at this day, in the latter discoveries of
 Countries, there should be found no other Go-
 vernment but Monarchical, and that almost
 Paternal being extended to a very few per-
 sons; and though there be found in these We-
 stern parts some Commonwealths, yet they
 are found onely here, and they so few, that
 they are of no force to invalidate the Divine
 Institution of the other, they having nothing
 but humane policy for their Foundation, and

no

no more of God's than of a common hand in their Institution, whereby evil as well as good arises up in the World, they having most commonly by Gods permission arose by way of Rebellion and Deffection from their lawful Sovereign as a punishment to their Offences, and chastisement for their own Iniquities.

Gouvernement But if mens consent will not satisfie their curiosity, the meer inanimate Creature will tell us that Nature instituted among them a Monarchical Power even in their Regiment: For in the simple and imperfect Gorvernment which we finde among them, there is a reasonable account of its being so. But if we consider the State which God made more immediately his Peculiar, surely the thing will be so evident that it must be granted. For what was the Patriarchal Government of the Children of *Israel* but (purely) paternally Monarchical? In *Agypt* they were under no other Government that we read of, than that of the *Egyptian* Kings. From the time of their going out of *Egypt* to their more particular inauguration of their Kings, though their Government hath seem'd to be only Republican, yet we shall find that *Moses*, *Josbua*, with the Judges were all in their kind Monarchs, and so in all the progress of their State

state we shall never finde the Civil Regiment of the *Jews* to be otherwise ; which one would suppose to be enough to recommend the Government of one above that of many. As for Elective Governments and such-like, we may draw a Consequence from what hath been already said ; But as for those Monarchies which are Mixed and Temperated, (it being no Contradiction to call them so) much might be said : But it will suffice my Enquiry to say, That great is their Happiness, who live under such Government ; But as great is their Unhappiness, who not rightly understand this their good Fortune. And they would in my mind do well to consider those great Priviledges, they so much boast of and stand upon, were at first the bountiful Donations of their Princes, granted to their Subjects upon extraordinary Occasions ; Which though by length of Time and continued Custome are grown into Established Laws ; yet surely cannot pretend to that Right or Priviledge, which is due to the Kingly Prerogative : and Princes may be Princes without them ; but they can be no Governors without their

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Princes,

Princes, who may act without any bodies saying, What doest Thou? But,

The Obligations betwixt Governors and Governed,

Most People will be ready to say, what! may Princes then Reign without controul? are they so Sovereign that they may do what they list without any Stop to be put to their Wills when grown Extravagant & Unjust? This is the great Question. This is that which so much works in the heads of busie bodies, and froths up in the Minds of the vain Multitude. The Question is indeed great, but may be answered without any great Difficulty; for that there is a mutual Obligation of Obedience betwixt Sovereign and Subject, is so undeniably true, that Kings themselves will grant it as well as the People: But that there is a vast difference betwixt the Obligations of Princes and that of the People, must be granted by the People, as well as Princes. That the most Absolute Prince is subject to the Laws of God, his own Conscience, and the Rules of common Justice, none will deny. But that the most petty Monarch can forfeit to any of his Subjects his Authority, upon breach

breach of those Obligations, though it hath frequently been practis'd, yet ought by no means to be asserted: For as it doth not at all follow, that because Princes are not subject to their Subjects, therefore they are free from all Subjection; So neither doth it by any means follow, that because they are not free from all Subjection, therefore they are subject to their Subjects. For Princes are tied and circumscribed in the exercise of their Power by Laws; yet it is not to be understood that they are so restrained by the Efficient and Compulsive part of them, but by the Exemplary only. For all Laws contain in them two special Causalities; the one Efficient and Compulsive, whereby a Civil Penalty being denounced, and impending over the Head of the Infringers thereof; they are liable to loss either of outward Goods, or Life itself, according to the Merit of the Offence. The other Causality is Exemplary, whereby a Form and Rule is prescribed, directing those that are guided thereby, to the observation of Justice and Equity as well to Publick as Private Good; and to this Kings are no less bound than
D 2 . . . their

Subjects; they ought to observe entirely and religiously these sound and profitable Laws, and that upon pain of Gods Displeasure; But surely it cannot consist with the Laws of God, of natural Justice, or Nations to inflict Punishments on Princes Sovereign: Not but that the Breach of Laws, Murder, unjust Spoils, &c. are as great, or greater Crimes in them than others; But because there can be no just Execution of Punishment upon them. For all Penalties must be justly inflicted, or else they are mere Injustice, though the Persons upon whom they are inflicted never so much deserve them. Now there is none can execute any Malefactor without Authority from the Supreme Power of the Sword; and there can be but one proper subject of this Power. (at least in Monarchical Governments). Who then can with any pretence of Justice or Legality execute any Penal Laws against his Prince? Who can Authorise them for such an Attempt? Or give them power even to think? I wonder then at the presumption of those who dare lift up the least of their Fingers against their Sovereign, though but to the

the falling of one Hair from his Head. But though, this be so great, so necessary, and so convincing a Truth, Yet the Multitude will find a way to slip the yoke off their own Necks, and put it upon that of their Leaders; they will say, Princes were made for them, and may too be made by them; but yet they'll bear such Reverence to their King, that they'll maintain Him and his Honours, whilst he maintains them and their Priviledges: but it is unreasonable to suppose they should do it any longer, that they should tamely lay down their Necks, and let him tread and insult over them, is no Duty of Subjects. In short, they will be obedient to his Rule, while he is so to their Humours, which are very apt to rise upon the suspicion of the growth of Tyranny, or Alteration in Religion; either of which they assert, is an account warrantable enough to justify the greatest Sedition: But whether it be so or no, let us examine. And first for Tyranny. And here first let us see, supposing Tyranny to be a just Plea for Defection, whether they understand it aright, and do not

not often mistake the thing, and look up-
 on that to be Tyranny, which is not so;
 and so raise infinite Commotions upon no
 account at all; and this we may find
 them very apt to do. For they look upon
 any sort of Plenipotency, or Unlimited
 Power (nay and Limited too, when they
 have a mind to it) immediately to be Tyranny;
 affirming that it is not separable from
 some sorts of Government, and that One
 Man is not capable of such a mass of Po-
 wer without too near an approach to that
 kind. Upon these slender Apprehensions
 they will begin to think Treasons, and in
 little Surmises hatch Seditious Opinions in
 their Minds, and then proceed to talk, and
 in Scandalous Hypposed Politicks diffuse
 their Poisons, till at length, having war-
 med themselves into a Temper fit for Ac-
 tion, they'll not scruple to perpetrate the
 greatest Rebellions. But that all this is ex-
 tremely Unjustifiable will appear from
 their Misunderstanding of Tyrannical Go-
 vernment; and moreover that supposing
 this was manifest Tyranny, they were yet
 not to be justified. As to the first, They
 most egregiously mistake the Notion of
 Tyranny

Tyranny; by supposing it to be an inseparable concomitant of Monarchy: For there is no such thing as Government in it self Tyrannical, Tyranny being but the Abuse an unjust Exercise of Power, to which any Power is as obnoxious as Monarchical: And I cannot see, why the Government of *One* should not be as far from it, as that of *Many*; the Laws here being commonly as kind and benigne as there, or at least may be; and we may find the Yoke of Obedience as heavy where Liberty is most asserted among the credulous Multitude, among whom a bold Affirmation of Freedom goes for the thing it self. But supposing it otherwise, that Monarchy is of so near a kin to Tyranny, nay, and that the Prince were an apparent Tyrant; the People indeed are unhappy who are under his Rule, and to be pitied; but no ways to be remedied by their own Force: the Nature of Government forbids it, and God himself has nowhere allow'd it; but has always taught his Servants Obedience unto the most enormous of Princes. I can then no ways commend that so highly applauded Action of *Junius Brutus* with his Accomplices, in
 Deposing

Deposing *Tarquinius*, his Lawful, though Cruel Sovereign; which though it lookt like Heroick, and was agreeable to the discontented Humours of the People, yet without doubt was unjust and wicked: But much more was he to be blamed, for not only Deposing the King, but the Government too: For the Government being abused cannot be in fault, or for any Mis-carriages of the Prince, or any external accident lapse to any other: For any Government may be so abused, as is apparent in *Junius* himself; who expelling his Prince who Reigned by lawful Power and Title, Usurped a Power to which he had no Title; and then proceeded to an Act of as great Tyranny as the Deposed Prince had ever done; *viz.* The thrusting out his Equal and Colleague, because possibly he might have committed an Offence, not that he had. And this is the Changing *Kingly* Government to that of *Many*: Which, however it may be Disputed, seldom proves more favourable to the People than the other; and surely then it is better living under One Tyrant, than ten Thousand; under a Wise Man that is Cruel, than

than under the foolish and barbarous Cru-
 elty of the Multitude. The Tyrant is like
 a Whirlwind, whose Fury may over-
 throw some, may destroy here and there
 a Tree, a stately Cedar; or single Town;
 but the Deposing this Tyrant, and the
 Anarchy which follows it, destroys whole
 Cities, unpeoples and lays waste Coun-
 tries, makes Confusion every where, and
 like a general Inundation, overflows all
 with sad Destruction. How miserably
 then, do People chouse themselves, when
 they are mad for a Change? Little con-
 sidering, that besides the Confusion which
 they make, they commonly change for
 the worse, and there is not one in an Hun-
 dred, it may be a Thousand, that attains
 to what he aimed at, or betters his Con-
 dition. So that thus to stab real or sup-
 posed Tyranny and Monarchie at once,
 is not only against the Law of God, but
 Interest of most men; which it may be
 many will grant, and will bear to Extre-
 mity, at least upon force, the Oppression
 of their Goods, Persons and Fortunes. But
 when their Religion is in Danger. (& no one
 but looks upon his own as best) then they
 judge that even God himself is not inter-
 ested.

rested for civil Government, but he will permit them to stir; they can willingly bear the former Tyranny, but to have their Consciences oppressed, truly is a burden too intolerable for them to bear or crouch under, and even Christianity it self will afford them liberty here to cancel all other Obligations. A plausible Plea; but of no more force than the other, if not indeed less. For that Religion should permit those things to be done, which its precepts every where forbid, is so absurd an opinion that none will admit of, without making God himself command contradictions. That Religion doth forbid, and no where allow of such proceedings, is evident from that all its precepts and commands of Obedience, are delivered in general terms without any the least exception: from whence I gather, and declare, that were my Prince a Jew, Turk, Infidel, or Pagan; I would and ought in all things not absolutely unlawfully obey him. And surely the first Ages of Christianity judged so too, whilst under the Government of the greatest Enemies to Christianity, (even in its purity) and most barbarous executions, they did not only not resist their power, but even embrac'd their cruelties, lest those hands that

unlawfull

cut them off; and in the midst of Flames and greatest Tortures continued good Subjects. I would feign learn then how our Age comes to be so much better, or the Religion of our days so much wiser: or what Religion it is that is thus extraordinary pure, and yet teacheth such dismal Doctrines? The Romanists we all know do assert the Opinion, and practise it, but dare not own it; and there are others (who pretend to hate such Doctrines, and the Abbettours of them) who do not always assert it, nor own it, but yet have practised it. But I would fain have these People speak out, and tell the world plainly their meaning, whether they do look upon it as lawful to Dethrone their Prince upon the account of Religion, or not lawful? If they do not account it lawful, why do they suffer themselves to be transported with prejudic'd and mistaken zeal, as to commit upon such accounts the greatest Villanies? But if they allow it to be lawful, let them speak out I say. And they give Anabaptists, Independents, &c. to make War upon them upon their pretences to Religion, and so make a way for all Sects and Opinions to be lawfully at Enmity one with another. And I cannot see how, whilest they depose or decollate their lawful Prince for not being of their perswasion, they do any thing less than their greatest Enemies, the Papists, for Dethroning these they judge and call Hereticks. Methinks it would be a greater testimony of their Sincerity and Religion, to obey in all things not absolutely unlawful; and in the rest, to shew their Obedience by submission. 'Tis indeed a fine thing to sit in Thrones, and appear in the vacant seats of deposed Princes; but the purity of the Religion they so much pretend to, might teach them that there is a greatness which is not gaz'd at, and he that subjugates his will to his lawful Sovereign, hath a soul commanding that no Prince can force, nay, and in some measure is as great as his King, whilest he is able to obey, as the other to command. In short, to obey in all things may be highly Criminal; to resist

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resist must be so; but to submit can be nothing but safety and Peace.

I should here make an end of this, it may be impertinent Harangue; but that there are another sort of People I cannot pass by, who would assert against fix'd Obedience, That Dominion is founded altogether upon Power, and not Justice. Which to me seems, altogether unreasonable, from the notorious Michiev's that would croud in upon all Societies, where this Tenet is maintained. For what a powerful Motive would this be to all discontented persons, to invade and dispossess others, when there lyes no other difficulty before them, but the Means to Attach successfullly whom they intend to Destroy? But having overcome that by whatever Villanies, they shall become as Legal Owners of what they are become Masters, as the most Innocent and Just. But can there be ever any hopes of Peace or Security where this is allowed? But some will say, Power Acquired and Possess'd doth give Right to Hold, though not justify the Act of acquiring it; But surely no unjust Cause can produce a just Effect, nor any Inveterateness of the Evil or Tract of Time wipe away the Injustice. And moreover then one could never tell how to obey. For the Obligations of Obedience must of necessity vary according to the measure of the Power of the Ruler; and Subjects always be perplexed and undermin'd in their Resolutions. Many more are the Inconveniencies of this Opinion, and many Arguments brought for it, from God's Omnipotence- and Power over the Creatures, &c. But I am weary of troubling my Reader, and shall only say, That these are in my Opinion the real and true Notions of Civil Government; and I hope I shall never be of any other. Not that of the Peoples having Power to Constitute their Ruler, of being absurd and ridiculous: Not that of changing Governments, being Sacrilegious and Impious. Not that of Deposing Princes upon any account, as being Unnatural, Unjust, Unreasonable, Unchristian.

as

FINIS.